Scholarships to students

851. SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU. Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that grant of about Rs. 4 crores is due by December, 2005 from Central Government towards scholarships to the 16000 students in Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) if so, when the amount will be released to the Government of Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) The Ministry releases funds to Government of Andhra Pradesh under the schemes of (i) Post-Matric Scholarship to the students belonging to Scheduled Castes and (ii) Pre-Matric Scholarship to the Children of those engaged in unclean occupations for providing scholarships to about 4 lakh and 29 thousand students respectively. A sum of Rs. 27.97 crore under the Post-Matric Scholarship scheme and Rs. 2.50 crore under the Pre-Matric Scholarship have already been released during the current financial year 2005-06. The Ministry meets the total expenditure made by the State Government in a year over and above their Committed Liability under Post-Matric scheme. In case of Pre-Matric Scholarship, 50% of the total expenditure over and above the Committed Liability is met by the Ministry.

Declaring Lavana caste as Scheduled Tribe

†852. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of TRIBALAFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that after the Legislative Assembly of Himachal Pradesh had unanimously adopted a proposal to declare the Lavana caste engaged in cow rearing in Himachal Pradesh as Scheduled Tribe, the Members of Parliament of the State have orally and in written form requested the Government to grant the status of Schedule Tribe to the above community; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and latest position of the said issue?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBALAFFAIRS (SHRI PR. KYNDIAH): (a) There is no proposal received in the Ministry for inclusion of "Lavana"

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

caste in the list of Scheduled Tribes in Himachal Pradesh. However, a proposal for inclusion of "Lavana" community in the list of Scheduled Tribes in Himachal Pradesh has been received from the State Government of Himachal Pradesh.

(b) The proposal is being processed as per approved modalities.

Tribals facing eviction from land

853. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of TRIBALAFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that tribal people across the country are facing eviction from their land where they were living;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are considering to provide land to tribal people in the areas where they can live peacefully and earn their livelihood; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBALAFFAIRS (SHRI PR. KYNDIAH): (a) to (d) As a resulfbf inadequate recognition of the rights of forest dwelling scheduled tribes over forest land, where they have been living for generations, the threat of eviction persists. However, in order to save genuine forest dwellers, including tribals, from the threat of eviction, the Ministry of Environment & Forests, on 21.12.2004, requested all the States/UTs not to resort to eviction of forest dwellers, including tribals, other than ineligible encroachers till complete survey was carried out for recognition of such people and their rights on forest land as provided in the guidelines dated 18.9.1990 issued under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. This was reiterated on 17.10.2005. On 3.11.2005, the Ministry of Environment & Forests also issued detailed revised guidelines for verification/recognition of such rights on forest land.

The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has also introduced a Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill, 2005 in the Lok Sabha on 13.12.2005, which seeks to recognise and vest the forest rights and occupation in forest land in forest dwelling scheduled tribes who have been residing in such forests for generations but whose rights could not be recorded, and to provide a framework for recording the forest rights so vested. The Bill